



Cherreguine Bible Doctrine Ministries

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AGES AND ADMINISTRATION

Two more Greek words for dispensations: the noun *aion* and *oikonomia* in addition to *chronos* and *kairos*. The noun is usually translated "age" refers to dispensations as categories of human history [Romans 16:17, Ephesians 3:9].

Oikonomia had come to mean the management of a household; it implies order not chaos, a plan rather than confusion, an arrangement rather than disarray. *Oikonomia* does not denote time but described a divine administration during a distinct historical era [[1 Corinthians 9:17, Ephesians 1:8-10, 3:2-3, 8-9, 1 Timothy 1:3-4]. *Oikonomia* identifies the Church Age, during which God administers a set of divine policies and provisions unique only to the Church Age.

Administration becomes an important issue in distinguishing the dispensations from one another. At decisive junctures in His overall plan for mankind- God institutes changes in delegated authority, responsibility, procedure, and available assets. These changes in the divine administration of human history involved first one group of people, then another, and another.

The categorization for the dispensation is derived from the people at the focus of divine revelation in a specific period of time. In the course of human history, this focus passes from several benefactors:

From Gentiles believers to the believers
of the nation of Israel;
From Israel to the first advent of
Jesus Christ;
From Jesus Christ to believers of the
Church Age;
From Church Age to remnant of
Israel in the Tribulation;

From Tribulation to Christ;
The Ruler of the millennial kingdom

Each administration involves new divine mandates accompanied by new divine resources for fulfilling those mandates. As a result, the post-salvation way of life of believers is significantly different in various eras of human history.

Scripture reveals the believer's way of life most comprehensively in the dispensations of Israel and the Church the details of which disclosed and confirmed the principle of change against a background of continuity.

The doctrine of dispensations is not biased and arbitrary classification superimposed by man on the Bible. They are an integral part of divine revelation. The Greek vocabulary establishes that the subject of dispensations is presented in the Scripture. The Lord Jesus Christ is the number one exponent of the doctrine of dispensations –He affirmed the existence of distinct times and epochs which God the Father has fixed by His own authority.

To reject the doctrine of the dispensations is to reject the perfection of Christ who taught it but widely misunderstood by His disciples. His disciples missed the beauty of the doctrine because of their racial prejudice and religious sentiments. In the same way, some Christians of the Church Age are missing the truth of the doctrine because of their ignorance and faithfulness to their religious leaders. They accept the teaching of their leaders without further investigation or examination [Acts 17:11].

To accept the teaching of any preacher or pastor without further examination of their basis in Bible is fatal. A couple of supporting verses is not enough to form a doctrine or a teaching. A doctrine must agree with the entire body of biblical doctrine. Do not accept a teaching without a clear and concrete foundation in the Word of God. Is the doctrine applicable for us in the Church Age or for believers in the past dispensations? Is the doctrine for our era or dispensation or for another dispensation?